PRESS KIT
May 2008

ANIMAL MECHANICALS

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Meet the Animal Mechanicals: **Rex, Unicorn, Komodo, Sasquatch** and **Mouse**. *Animal Mechanicals* is an action/adventure series for preschoolers that combines the excitement of monster truck rallies with the fantastic world of mythical animals on cool quests. And, best of all, Animal Mechanicals transform!

Animal Mechanicals live and play in a place unlike any other: a colorful 'snap-together-take-apart" world which can also transform, just like them. Things are always popping up, changing shape and most of all presenting challenges to the Animal Mechanicals. In each adventure the Animal Mechanicals get their new mission from Island Owl who displays simple pictogram images on his 'screen-face'. Each adventure has a variety of small challenges to overcome on the road to "Mission Accomplished." The challenges vary requiring the Animal Mechanicals to use their wide array of unique transformed "Mechana" abilities. The Animal Mechanicals (and the audience) must decide who should face each challenge.

Animal Mechanicals is produced by Halifax Film, a DHX Media Company in association with CBC Television.

SERIES SYNOPSIS

Meet the Animal Mechanicals: **Rex, Unicorn, Komodo, Sasquatch** and **Mouse.** This powerful team of transforming superheroes is always involved in adventures that combine the irresistible fun and excitement of monster truck rallies with the fantastic world of mythical animals on cool quests.

In each episode, the Animal Mechanicals set off from Tiger Base, their island-in-the-sky home, for a mission. Their missions always take them to a new floating island that is like a fantastic theme park, with unique landscapes and features. Here, the Animal Mechanicals encounter fun and fantastic challenges. They must overcome these challenges by transforming into "super" versions of themselves. They get to choose and use their special abilities to help them complete their mission.

The challenges that the Animal Mechanicals face, mirror the conflicts, uncertainties, and changes children face as they attempt to understand and master their world. The attitude of the Animal Mechanicals and the series is challenges are FUN! Animal Mechanicals *love* a challenge. This series has at its core the theme that while many things may seem difficult or even impossible at first - as they often do to young children – one day, you can be or do anything. Nothing is impossible for Animal Mechanicals!

Along with the “inner theme” which encourages resilience in children, the series also features a foundation curriculum of problem solving. The challenges the Animal Mechanicals encounter include simple color, pattern, or shape sequencing and recognition, spatial awareness, and exploration of pre-science and physics principals such as up and down, big and small, light and heavy and push and pull.

Whether choosing a transformation, deciding on a strategy, or puzzling out a problem, the series is designed to allow time for our audience to think through each challenge along with the Animal Mechanicals and, as much as possible, feel they are a part of the action.

Animal Mechanicals presents a world that children young and old find irresistible: big machines doing big impressive things, and stories filled with fantasy, fun, and friendly play.

CHARACTERS

Each Animal Mechanical has unique attributes, which young children can readily identify with. Their transformative abilities mirror the way children "become" superheroes, taking on the inspirational qualities they need to feel powerful and in control of their world.

As we get to know the Animal Mechanicals, we discover that while they may be animal machines on the outside, on the inside they're just like any group of young children, learning to play together and interact, trying to avoid the pitfalls and potholes of friendship.

REX

Rex is Mechana-Strong. He transforms into a powerful backhoe with numerous hydraulics that help him lift, dig, plow, and carry heavy things from place to place. His heavy-duty jaws allow him to lift and move all kinds of objects and items.

Rex is the spark and consensus builder. He's the "Sarge," and natural leader. Despite his rough and ready exterior, he is soft as syrup inside and often provides a good "bumper to cry on" when needed. He is the group's moral compass and can be relied on to sort out right and wrong.

Rex's innate ability to organize the team and build consensus to problem-solve often saves the day. He also has considerable patience for the shenanigans of Sasquatch and Komodo. Rex takes most things in stride, except when he's hungry.

Rex has a weakness: he's always hungry! His tummy is forever rumbling and he is always on the lookout for a tasty snack. This sometimes clouds his thinking and makes him act before he thinks and do silly, unpredictable things.

UNICORN

Unicorn's special power is Mechana-Fly. She sprouts rotors and rocket motors and takes off into the sky. Not only can she fly, she has a magic horn that can create a whirlwind or light things up… you name it! Unicorn always takes to the sky when she uses her horn.

Unicorn is always ready for a mission and has complete faith in her mechanical cohorts. She loves to laugh and is usually the first to break the ice after a tense moment. And Unicorn has style. She always adds her own flourish - whether it's an extra mid-air whirl or a really cool landing - she does it all with pizzazz!

Unicorn has several iconic sayings:

"*Strong like a titanium tyrannosaurus*" (When Rex transforms).

"*Stretchy like big rubber monkey*" (when Sasquatch transforms).

"*Fast like a rocket"* (when Mouse transforms).

"*Handy-dandy tool time!"* (when Komodo transforms).

KOMODO

Komodo is the Mechana-Gizmo. His tail is loaded with a veritable Swiss Army knife of tools and gadgets which comically pop out after his transformation. Komodo represents extreme flexibility and versatility. He can manipulate any gear, lever, winch or widget that comes his way.

When Komodo transforms, his tail always emits three "wrong" objects before presenting the correct tool. These wrong tools can be silly or serious, but obviously not right for the job.

Komodo is also the brains of the group. He is very curious about the fascinating worlds that the Animal Mechanicals visit and the intriguing inhabitants they find there. He also has his own style of karate that is not always terribly effective as he carries out his part of a mission.

His quizzical nature makes him very good at identifying potential pitfalls and it's Sasquatch that he usually needs to warn about these. And despite his best efforts, Komodo always seems to be at the receiving end of an accidental bump from Sasquatch which usually sends him tumbling tail-over-teakettle.

SASQUATCH

Sasquatch is Mechana-Stretchy. He's like a big, round, bouncy ape with hyper-extendible legs and arms that allow him to stretch around anything and reach anywhere. Nothing is out of reach for Sasquatch… except maybe common sense. He certainly is not the brains behind the outfit.

The adrenaline junky of the group, Sasquatch loves action at high-speed and literally throws himself headfirst into any adventure. Where Komodo's rallying cry might be "*Look first, think twice*," XXX-Overdrive Sasquatch always leaps before he looks. His favorite saying is "*The Mighty Sasquatch – Making it happen!"*

Highly excitable, extremely loyal, but easily provoked, he can get pretty steamed when he feels he is being slighted, (which is often). And everything is a competition for Sasquatch.
Sasquatch loves pounding stuff and can't wait for impact. He lives for action and his refrain is "*It's pounding time!"* This gung-ho attitude often leaves him and his pals in hot water. He might not be the sharpest Animal Mechanical (perhaps owing to repeatedly hammering into things head first) but he has a huge heart and is most protective of his friends.

Sasquatch never takes the sensible advice that Komodo is always eager to dispense. The end result is always some ridiculous slapstick that gets Komodo twisted up. Together, this Laurel and Hardy team keep the other Animal Mechanicals on their titanium toes.

MOUSE

Mouse is Mechana-Fast. She transforms into a rocket-powered speeder that can turn on a dime at high speeds and roll almost 90 degrees. Her small size allows her to get into places the other Animal Mechanicals cannot: tight corners, under low fences, etc. She also has super hearing thanks to her huge ears.

Like Unicorn, Mouse always has a unique perspective on the world and loves to play an active roll in reconnaissance.

Mouse speeds from place to place and has a "zippy" disposition to match. She is enthusiastic and loves surprises – preferably the good kind. The baby of the group, "Mouse" is kind of Animal-Mechanical-in-training. Her confidence is not as well established as the others and she sometimes frets about her small size. But she is sensitive and caring and can often understand the strange sounds and motions of the island creatures they encounter.

The other Animal-Mechanicals are always trying to look out for Mouse. After all, she's quite cute and all innocence.

ANIMAL MECHANICALS

SEASON ONE - EPSIODIC SYNOPSES

Episode 101 "Turbo Bean Island"
The Destination is Turbo Bean Island. The Mission is to plant the frisky Turbo Bean. Rex transforms to dig a hole; Sasquatch transforms to stretch up and grab the Bean which is stuck in a gear tree; Mouse transforms to chase the Bean; Unicorn transforms to chase the bean down to Mouse. When they do manage to plant the Turbo Bean it sprouts a Bean Pole from which more Turbo Beans appear. Secondary Characters: the Turbo Bean

Episode 102 "Bunny Boomer Island"
The Destination is Bunny Boomer Island. The Mission is to help the Bunnies build their Boomer. Screw Top Squirrels block the path between the Bunnies and the Boom Blocks. Komodo transforms to screw the Squirrels shut; Unicorn transforms to catch a falling block; Sasquatch transforms to press the nose on the completed Bunny Boomer, music begins to play and they all celebrate with a dance. Secondary Characters: the Boom Bunnies and the Screw-Top Squirrels

Episode 103 "Cow Castle Hassle"
The Destination is Cow Castle Island. The Mission is to help the Cow Castle get to the Grassy Meadow on the other side of the Pop-Rocket Corn Field. Sasquatch transforms to look over the maze to find the way out; Rex transforms to move the pile of Pop-Rocket Corn which blocks the path; Mouse transforms to zoom in front of Cow Castle and open the gate before she crashes into it. They end celebrating with a snack of Pop-Rocket Pop-Corn. Secondary Characters: the Cow Castle

Epsiode 104 "Whale Plane Island"
The Destination is Whale Plane Island. The Mission is to build a runway long enough for the Air Whale to land on. Rex transforms to lift the heavy Runway Ribbon; Sasquatch transforms to stretch to all corners of the Ribbon and hold it down; Komodo transforms to hammer the Ribbon into place; Unicorn transforms to use her magic horn to guide the Whale Plane to the new runway. When the Whale Plane lands, it reveals that it's loaded with a cargo of more Runway Ribbon. Secondary Characters: the Air Whale

Episode 105 "Dino Mountain Island"
The Destination is Dino Mountain Island. The Mission is to take out a cog which is stuck between the Dino's teeth. Rex transforms to lift up the Dino's foot which is stuck on a button; Sasquatch transforms to stretch down and pull out the cog. The relieved Dino then turns his escalating spine into a slide which the Animal Mechanicals slide down with delight. Secondary Characters: the Dino Mountain

Episode 106 "Chickadee Island"
The Destination is Chickadee Island. The Mission is to help Momma Chickadee hatch all her eggs. Sasquatch transforms to reach up and wind Momma's "key"; Mouse transforms to chase after a runway egg; Rex transforms to lift the egg back into the nest. The egg is successfully hatched and a Big Baby Chickadee appears. Secondary Characters: Momma Chickadee and Baby Chickadees

Episode 107 "Beetle Buggy Island"
The Destination is Beetle Buggy Island. The Mission is to unblock a traffic jam. Unicorn transforms to get a bird's eye view of the track; Rex transforms to lift an upturned Buggy the right way up; Mouse transforms to catch a runaway Buggy. When the Mission is accomplished they celebrate by racing around the track. Secondary Characters: the Beetle Buggies

Episode 108 "Pop Apart Penguins"
The Destination is Pop Apart Penguin Island. The mission is to build a bigger igloo for the penguins. Komodo transforms to saw ice blocks out of an ice mountain; Rex transforms to lift the blocks and build the igloo; Unicorn transforms to freeze over a dangerous crack in the ice. The Penguins pop apart like Russian Dolls and double their number. Secondary Characters: the Pop Apart Penguins

Episode 109 "Jigsaw Shark Island"
The Destination is Jigsaw Shark Island. The Mission is to put together a jigsaw. Sasquatch transforms to stretch up and see how to put the jigsaw together; Rex transforms to lift the heavy jigsaw pieces; Unicorn transforms to fly after a lost jigsaw piece. When the jigsaw is completed it lights up revealing a picture of Mouse. Secondary Characters: the Jigsaw Sharks

Episode 110 "Bell Bot Island"
The Destination is Bell Bot Island. The Mission is find the missing Bell Bots. Komodo transforms to unscrew the bolts which the Poppa Bell Bot is caught in; Rex transforms to lift Komodo up to the right height; Unicorn transforms to fly up and find Momma and Baby Bell Bot. When the Bell Bots are re-united they play a Bell Music Concert. Secondary Characters: Momma, Poppa and Baby Bell Bot

Episode 111 "Elephant Train Island"
The Destination is Elephant Train Island. The Mission is to move the rock-blocks that are blocking the train track. Rex transforms to lift the heavy blocks; Sasquatch transforms to stretch across the chasm and act as an emergency bridge; Unicorn transforms to save the day as the Elephant Train almost falls into the chasm. They celebrate with a snow-cone left by the Elephant Train. Secondary Characters: the Elephant Train

Episode 112 "Mechana Pinball Island"
The Destination is Mechana Pinball Island. The Mission is to help the Pinballs play their game. Rex transforms to pull the knob; Sasquatch transforms to stretch up and push the flipper button; Mouse transforms to whiz inside the game and help the pinball into the hole. When the game is completed the Pinballs want to start all over again. Secondary Characters: the Pinballs

Episode 113 "Giraffe Crane Island"
The Destination is Giraffe Crane Island. The Mission is to find more mechana-logs. Komodo transforms to saw more logs; Sasquatch transforms to pretend to be a tree in which the woodpecker can perch; Rex transforms to lift the bundles of mechana-logs. As soon as one woodpecker is safely housed, another woodpecker appears. Secondary Characters: the Giraffe Cranes and the Woodpeckers

Episode 114 "Glitterfish Island"
The Destination is Glitterfish Island. The Mission is to find the lost Power Bubble. Mouse transforms to catch the crab who has stolen the Bubble; Komodo transforms to release the Bubble from the Mechana Clam; Unicorn transforms to fly after the Bubble and guide it down using her wind power. When the Bubble is replaced the fish glitter once again, but the crab runs away with Komodo. Secondary Characters: the Glitterfish, the Mechana Crab and the Mechana Clam

Episode 115 "Snail's Pace Race"
The Destination is Racing Snail Island. The Mission is to ride the Racing Snails, but a Cog Caterpillar is blocking the track. Mouse transforms to chase after a runaway cog; Rex transforms to lift the cogs back into place; Komodo transforms to screw the cogs on tightly. When the caterpillar is repaired the track is cleared, the race begins but it is run at a snail's pace. Secondary Characters: the Racing Snails and the Cog Caterpillar

Episode 116 "Mechana Bat Island"
The Destination is Mechana Bat Island. The Mission is to make the Bat Cave bigger. Komodo transforms to knock down a rock-block wall with a mechana-pick-axe; Rex transforms to move the heavy rock-blocks out of the way; Unicorn transforms to light up the dark cave with her magic horn so that the Bats can perform their best flying show ever. Secondary Characters: the Mechana Bats

Episode 117 "Hippo Hovercraft Island"
The Destination is Hippo Hovercraft Island. The Mission is to change the Hippo's worn-out bumpers. Mouse transforms to chase the Hippos into the pit-stop; when they rise up into the air, Unicorn transforms to chase them down; Komodo transforms to use his wrench to unscrew the bumper-bolts. They end by having a fun Hippo bumping session. Secondary Characters: the Hippo Hovercrafts

Episode 118 "Balloon Volcano Island"
The Destination is Volcano Balloon Island. The Mission is to stop the balloons from popping. Mouse transforms to speed after the Balloons and sees what is popping them; Unicorn transforms to keep the balloons away from the hedgehog's sharp spikes using her wind power; Komodo transforms to use his scissors to trim the hedgehog's spikes. The hedgehogs return to their hedge home and the balloons are safe. Secondary Characters: the Balloon Volcano, the Mechana Hedge Hogs and the Hedge

Episode 119 "Mechana Dragonfly Island"
The Destination is Dragonfly Island. The Mission is to rescue the crashed Dragonfly and get her flying again. Komodo transforms to saw up bamboo to repair the Dragonfly; Rex transforms to pick her up and launch her into the air; Unicorn transforms to fly up and use her wind power to keep the Dragonfly airborne. The Dragonfly has three baby Dragonflies in mid-air and free of her weight, is able to fly again. Secondary Characters: Mechana Dragonflies and Baby Mechana Dragonflies

Episode 120 “Mechana Parrot Island”
The Destination is Mechana Parrot Island. The Mission is to help the Mechana Parrot sing her beautiful song again. Unicorn transforms to use her weather powers to make rain and sunshine so that sunflowers will grow strong and healthy; Komodo transforms to unscrew the sunflowers so that they can find the seeds inside; Mouse transforms to race around and catch the flying seeds. They feed the seeds to the Parrot and she sings her song once more. Secondary Characters: the Mechana Parrot

BIOGRAPHIES

MICHAEL DONOVAN – Executive Producer

Michael Donovan, co-founder of Halifax Film, a DHX Media company has over 20 years experience creating, financing, producing and marketing Canadian film and television programming. He co-founded the Canadian production company Salter Street Films in 1983, which merged with Alliance Atlantis Communications Inc. in 2001.

His work in the Canadian television and film industry has been recognized with numerous Gemini Awards, three International Emmy nominations, a Primetime Emmy nomination and an Academy Award for the feature documentary *Bowling for Columbine*.

Mr. Donovan is currently the Executive Producer of the hit comedy series *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, SXV**,** the motion-capture CG animation pre-school series, *Bo on the Go!* , CG animation pre-school series *Animal Mechanicals*, live action puppet series *The Mighty Jungle* and the upcoming kids spelling challenge series *Canada's Super Speller* for CBC Television. As well, he is Producer for the recently released feature film *Shake Hands with the Devil* based on retired General Romeo Dallaire's award-winning book of the same name.

CHARLES BISHOP – Executive Producer

Charles Bishop producer credits include the Academy Award winning feature documentary *Bowling for Columbine* and numerous television series such as the highly acclaimed CBC pre-school series *POKO*. Operating his own production company until 1998, Bishop merged with Salter Street Films and began managing the company's production slate including the notable series *Made in Canada/The Industry, Emily of New Moon, This Hour Has 22 Minutes* and *The Awful Truth*. In 2001, he took on the job of overseeing television series (fiction) worldwide for Alliance Atlantis Entertainment.

In 2004, with Michael Donovan, he co-founded Halifax Film, which is now publicly traded as DHX Media in Toronto and on London's AIM Exchange.

As well as being President, Charles continues to produce film and television programs, most recently; *Lunar Jim* a pre-school series for CBC and BBC, *Bo on the Go!* a new motion-capture CG animation pre-school series also for CBC, and a primetime drama series *The Guard* for Global Television.

Charles Bishop has three Gemini Awards and numerous international awards.

JEFF ROSEN – Executive Producer

Jeff Rosen is the Creative Head, Children's, Youth and Family for Halifax Film. Jeff was the Co-Creator and Executive Producer of the Gemini Award-winning preschool series *POKO*, and Executive Producer on *Lunar Jim*. Jeff currently oversees an ambitious new slate of children's programs set to debut including Co-Creating and Executive Producing *Bo on the Go!*, Creating and Executive-Producing *Animal Mechanicals*. In addition, Jeff Co-Created *The Mighty Jungle*. Prior to coming to Halifax Film, Jeff was the Executive Story Editor of the world-wide hit series *Theodore Tugboat*, Creator and Producer of *Pirates!*, and Show Runner for the multi-award winning series *Wonder Why?* The television series and feature films Jeff has been involved in have been sold to more than 170 countries to date.

KATRINA WALSH – Producer

Katrina Walsh has been working in the film and television industry for 15 years, in both live action and animation. Katrina's producer credits include *Lunar Jim*, a stop-motion animation series for pre-schoolers as well as well as for the Gemini award-winning stop-motion animation pre-school series, *POKO*. Most recently she was Producer for *POKO, Season III.*

Katrina is currently producing a motion-capture CG animation pre-school series *Bo on the Go!*, CG animation pre-school series *Animal Mechanicals*, the live action puppet show *The Mighty Jungle* and upcoming kids spelling challenge series *Canada's Super Speller*. Katrina Walsh has extensive post-production experience in feature films and numerous other television series.

GILLY FOGG – Series Director

Gilly Fogg was born in Dublin, Ireland. She has worked as a drama teacher in South Africa, a puppeteer in Scotland and studied film in Canada. She trained in animation at the Jiri Trnka Studios in Prague, Czech Republic and then went to work as a stop-motion animator for HOT Animation in Manchester, England. Gilly animated on *Brambly Hedge*, *Rubbadubbers* and *Bob the Builder*, then trained as a director and directed the *Bob the Builder* series. She has recently moved to Nova Scotia with her family and is enjoying the fresh air. Gilly loves Children's TV.

PRODUCTION COMPANY PROFILE

Halifax Film, co-founded by Michael Donovan and Charles Bishop develops and produces original film and television programming. Halifax Film manages and co-ordinates all aspects of a program's life, including developing original ideas; purchasing literary rights; arranging production financing; carrying out production and post-production; and exploiting worldwide distribution rights. Halifax Film is a subsidiary of DHX Media Ltd., a leading international producer and distributor of television programming and interactive content with an emphasis on children, family and youth markets.

Halifax Film has recently released the feature film *Shake Hands with the Devil*, a co-production with Barna-Alper and Seville Productions. The company has produced the Gemini award-winning pre-school stop-motion animation series *POKO III*, the drama series *NORTH/SOUTH,* the children's stop-motion animation series, *Lunar Jim II*, a co-production with Alliance Atlantis Communications, the recently launched motion capture CG animation pre-school series *Bo on the Go!* and the multi-award winning hit comedy series *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, *XV.* Halifax Film is currently producing a number of projects including a CG animation pre-school series *Animal Mechanicals*, a live-action children's puppet series *The Mighty Jungle*, the upcoming kids spelling challenge series *Canada's Super Speller* for CBC Television and co-producing with Brightlight Pictures the primetime drama series *The Guard* for Global Television.